

# SB 1253 (Steinberg)

## Ballot Initiative Transparency Act

### Purpose

Would establish a process for increased transparency, inclusion, and public comprehension of ballot initiatives.

Creates mechanisms should a proponent need to amend or remove their initiative from the ballot.

### Background

Since 1911, a large majority of Californians support the initiative process. However, flaws have continued to highlight the need for reforms.

In 2013, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) released a statewide survey which found that the following opinions of voters regarding the citizens' initiative process:

83 percent believe the wording of initiatives is too complex and confusing.

75 percent are in favor of giving proponents of an initiative more time to collect signatures if they ONLY use volunteers to gather signatures.

### Bill Summary

- Requires the Attorney General to implement a 30-day public review process of the proposed initiative

before circulation for signatures

- Extends the amount of time, from 25 to 45 days, for Department of Finance and Legislative Analyst to send their fiscal analysis to the Attorney General
- Extends the signature gathering period from 150 days (5 months) to 180 days (6 months)
- Upon report from the proponents they have gathered 25% of necessary signatures, requires the Secretary of State to send copies of an initiative to the Legislature for public hearing
- Allows proponents of an initiative to withdraw their initiative no later than 132 days before Election Day

### Support

Common Cause (Sponsor), League of Women Voters (Co-Sponsor), California Forward Action Fund, Think Long

### Contact

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